

I am Roger Sherman a Shellfish Commissioner for the past twenty five years for the Town of Groton. I am writing in strong support of House Bill 5720 a Water Testing Facility at UCONN Avery Point.

Over the last five years the burden of Water Sampling has strained the Groton Shellfish Commission to the breaking point. Five years ago the State Bureau of Aquaculture took some of the samples with us providing the boat and operator. Aquaculture transported the samples to the Milford Lab. Over the last five years they have dropped out of going with us but they would pick up the samples and transport them. Then they said that they would provide a Courier Service. That lasted about six months. Now we are forced to transport the samples ourselves. In addition the number and frequency of samples the State requires to keep our areas open has at least doubled.

We are volunteers and we support three paid Wardens and three boats with no funding except for license fees. We sell about two thousand recreational licenses a year. This Wednesday I spent three hours taking samples in the Mystic River with 30 plus MPH winds.

We need relief from the onerous transportation of water samples to Milford. Avery Point would provide this for Southeastern Connecticut. Without it we will eventually cease to function as a Commission and there goes Recreational and Commercial Shellfishing in the Town of Groton.

Roger Sherman 306 Fishtown Rd. Mystic, Ct. 06355